

## India denies entry to asbestos ship SS Norway

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12 May 2006 - Toxic cruise liner SS Norway is temporarily not allowed to enter Indian territorial waters. The Indian Supreme Court awaits a review by the newly established Indian Technical Committee on Ship Recycling. Their final decision is expected by July 2006. The court order follows a petition filed by Ban Asbestos Network India (BANI).

In February 2006 Bangladesh denied entry of the SS Norway (former SS France, renamed SS Blue Lady) to their breaking yards. Yet on 5 May the ship was being tugged from Malaysia toward the infamous scrapping beaches of Alang on the Gujarat coast of India. The vessel allegedly was sold to an Indian Shipbreakers Consortium: Regent Shipping. The massive ocean liner SS Norway is thought to contain between 1,200 and 1,300 tons of asbestos - far more than the Clemenceau. Furthermore the vessel contains significant quantities of toxic PCB-contaminated material. Import of asbestos waste is banned in India. And in accordance with an earlier Supreme Court order, decontamination of a ship is a pre-condition for any ship to enter India. Instead of reacting to one ship at a time, the NGO Platform on Shipbreaking is calling on all countries concerned to adopt a blanket policy. This policy should be consistent with the Basel Convention's requirements to decontaminate End of Life ships in developed countries, prior to export for breaking. In the case of the SS Norway, the countries that should have taken responsibility for the ship include Germany and Malaysia. Last year the cruise liner was allowed to be illegally exported from the German Bremerhaven. And just days ago, the vessel left Malaysian waters for India without filing the necessary hazardous waste export notifications required under the Basel Convention.